GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2275
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2007
CHILD LABOUR IN COTTON FIELD
Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Nikhil Kumar Shri

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether lakhs of children are engaged in hybrid cotton field as reported in the Hindustan Times dated September 27, 2007;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry in this regard;

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof; and

(e) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this matter?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES)

(a) to (d): No, Sir. The reports received from the State Governments indicate that there are some cases of children working in the hybrid cotton fields where children were found to be mostly working with their parents. As per the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, employment of children is presently not prohibited in cotton fields. However, the State Governments have taken steps to ensure that children do not work on processes involving handling of pesticides in the hybrid cotton fields.

(e): Government is regularly monitoring the enforcement of Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 by the States. In order to step up enforcement of the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, a fortnight long nation-wide `Enforcement Drive against Child Labour` was launched by the Government on 14th November 2007. During this period, the State Governments had been specifically directed to conduct inspections/ raids and also launch awareness campaign against child labour.